

The Classical Bulletin

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No. 4

Our Plato¹

By LANE COOPER
Cornell University

President Odgers; Ladies and Gentlemen:

In the time allotted I hope to explain the title "Our Plato," and shall add a few words about feeding the mind with his works, subjoining a brief fable or myth on food for the body and food for the spirit. I shall also allude to those who have been possessed by Plato, and thought him theirs perhaps, when actually they were his; as when we say, Give us this day our daily bread, when the bread is the bread of the eternal Giver. And at the end there may be time to ask a question, Who or what will be here two hundred or two thousand years from now? Will any of our present interests then be alive? Will Plato?

"Our Plato." Can any one possess him? The point is a point in usage; and in order to test it let us adapt the diction of an excellent English writer of a hundred years ago; thus: "As an old woman deeply trustful sits reading her Bible, because of the world to come," so, as though it would fit one for the coming strife of a mundane or an academic sphere, he read the Dialogues of Plato. The first clause, faithfully quoted, means that the volume she has in hand is her own, not borrowed. What she is reading, however, is not her own; she knows it is the word of God. The usage is good. As a piece of bad usage, for a warning example, take the expression: "This Frenchman knows his Ovid"; or "knows his Art of Love." The ugly phrases are here used for an occasion; nobody recommends them. The *Ars Amatoria* is a work of Ovid, and belongs to him; the Frenchman may know it very well, but that does not make it his. If he got it by heart, as Phaedrus has been getting the similar Art of Lysias by heart, it would still be Ovid's Art of Love, and not the amatory art of a Frenchman. So let us not use bad Gallic English, nor ever say of any one that "he knows his Plato"; no, let us consider in what good English sense Plato may be ours; not Plato of the philosophers alone, or of the mystics, the poets, the neopagans, the scholars, the teachers of English; not of any class alone, but of all readers; Plato for every one of us, at least in some small measure—or, better, how we may be his.

To some extent he is a part of us, whether we are aware of the possession, or are not. Like his young friend Aristotle, he has so entered into the thought of Western civilization that one can hardly think at all without rethinking, very often, some thought that Plato set down in a Socratic conversation. You cannot be a reader of books without reading some one who has read

Plato, or at second or third remove has received the Platonic stimulation. In the best modern books the influence is direct. If you study the greater poets, Spenser, Milton, or Wordsworth, you read a matter which, next after a stimulus from the sacred Scriptures, constantly bears witness to a direct relation between the English poet and the matter of the Dialogues. And your gain as a reader is the more if you understand what matter you are reading. At a venture, take a lesser poet, Shelley. No considerable poet wrote feebler juvenile verse than did young Shelley. That verse is lacking in ideas. Plato is full of them. The study of Plato and Dante gave Shelley substance for his later verse, and for the best of his prose as well. The *Defence of Poetry* which Plato evoked from Shelley, draws its main arguments, examples, and beauty from the *Ion* and *Symposium*. In verse, it is with Shelley as with Keats; the lines we remember from them, while not on a level with Plato at first hand, are obviously Platonic:

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever.

The one remains, the many change and pass.

The study of Plato and Dante, a follower of Plato, transformed Shelley from a writer of small promise into a poet worthy of consideration. The study of Plato gave Shelley substance for his art. How often Plato has functioned as a second nature for the artist!

Plato gave Shelley what Horace calls *rem*, a thing deserving of poetic pains for its elaboration. The toil and pains which Horace in the *Ars Poetica* enjoins upon those who desire to write verse are not likely to be forgotten among his various items of advice. But there is a piece of counsel in the *Ars Poetica* which Horace there utters only once that is not too often remembered. Along with the toil and pains aforesaid, doubtless every one recalls his injunction to the poet about visiting the market: Go to the market-place, observe its busy strife, plunge your fountain-pen into a soft part of the butcher-boy till you draw blood, and with that blood infuse into your poem the very color of life. True, we sometimes forget that the practice itself is Socratic, and that Socrates saved Plato the trouble of visiting the market to learn the hues of life by going every day to the tables of the money-changers where the Bulls and the Bears engage in mutual transfusion. The Sage apparently walked down almost every morning from Harlem to Wall Street, and there spent the day with the boys and Bulls and Bears absorbing color. So that the injunction of Horace about life and color is already Platonic. But the counsel of Horace about studying Plato for substantial thought is quietly slipped in with the talk about life and color, and we do not so readily catch the truth which Horace, from his own experience, wishes deftly to convey, namely, that if you intend to write you need something to say, something more than a lilt, and that

¹ An address delivered after dinner at a meeting of the Classical Association of the Atlantic States at Philadelphia on Friday evening, April 28, 1939.

Plato, who knows more than Poe and Housman about vocal lilt, will also fill the mind with the music of substantial thought. He will fill the mind when it is empty, and stir the spirit when it nods.

Such is the effect of Plato on us if we are normal men and women; such it has always been upon normal human beings. And it is the effect which he as an artist intended; for our Plato has designs upon us. If it is an emotional effect as well as an appeal to our reason—and for examples read both the *Apology* and *Phaedo*, then that combined appeal to reason and emotion must be what he intended. And so in his *Phaedrus*; in Plato's Art of Love, when we read it, he stimulates both Charioteer and horses. Take the view you like of what his *dramatis personae* have to say about inspiration. Admit as we must that Plato himself knew the force of inspiration. Grant also that he has in general found two sorts of readers, one sort who forget the author of the Dialogues because the life in them seems very real, while the author of them hides, and the other sort, a smaller group, who commonly recall, while they are reading, that Plato wrote the work. In any case the fact remains that he was a conscious and untiring artist, steadily adapting ample resources of well-dusted knowledge to the attainment, in each dialogue, of the end he has there in view. He remembers. Memory plays a significant part in his writings, and doubtless played its part in the studies of his school. Accordingly, when he wrote he drew not only upon a growing knowledge of the art of dialogue, but upon a well-stored memory for facts. It was full of facts in history, tradition, myth, and poetry—he clearly knew Homer by heart; of facts in what we call physical science, in government, law, and what we call philosophy; though perhaps what he calls *Philosophia* more nearly corresponds to general scholarship. The Academy was a school of Arts and Sciences; to enter it you doubtless had to qualify in Greek and mathematics; thereafter you could gradually proceed to any liberal study you might choose. But the Head probably thought of himself as first of all a specialist in mathematics. Never forget that the skilful writer who composed the dialogues was trained not only in music, poetry, and gymnastic, so that from boyhood he could sing and dance and wrestle, but in computation and the higher mathematics. Now when geometers take up the art of letters, they know what they are about. Dante was schooled in mathematics; hence the *terza rima* and the other signs of conscious art and number in his works. And from Cambridge, home of Platonism and of mathematics, issued many a mystic and severely calculating poet besides Milton. Above all, in any single work of art, a poet like our Plato will keep one single end in view, and have all else converge upon that. The end, like the chief end of man according to the Catechism, may have a dual aspect, but the artist knows from the beginning where he will end. He is therefore not given to confusing means with end; and if his end is to kindle the mind and soul, the right emotion as well as the right thought, or rather emotion and thought conjoined, he will regard each dialogue as a means to that end, and never an end in itself. Our Plato does not always count as a friend of the emotions, but readers of his Art of Love, his *Phaedrus*, may recall that the Charioteer, the

reason, never could get to heaven without a team of emotional flying horses, the lower as well as the higher emotions; and none of the three could ever reach the heights if the black horse did not get to heaven too.

Here let us remark that in Plato's scheme of values nutrition comes before production, to the dismay of those who follow Freud and Jung. Plato's motto for our academic life would doubtless be the motto of Chaucer for his Clerk: "And gladly would he learn, and gladly teach"; but if the publishers made Plato take but half a motto for the title of a book about him, the title would be "Gladly Learn." That indicates the mighty reason why his works are so nutritious.

At this point I was going to say more fully what we shall cut short; that a very interesting study could be made of those who have deliberately gone to Plato for bread and wine, for food and inspiration when they had to write or speak, and the words and ideas did not seem ready to flow. There must be many persons who know the trick. And there must be evidence on the point that one could find in books, and then assemble and array. For myself, I have known a half-dozen persons who deliberately went or go to the Dialogues for inspiration when essays or addresses must be written; and that too, whether what they then read of Plato had, or did not have, a very direct bearing on the subject of the ensuing disquisition.

I take it this is not the place to elaborate the influence of Plato upon numberless persons throughout the ages from Aristotle to Paul to Augustine to Bonaventura to Ruskin. That influence has been followed in a learned way by Shorey, Agar, and others, but must yet be studied more, in sections and by countries; the study would suffice for many doctoral dissertations of a very profitable sort for writers and readers alike.

We may, however, note three points in the story of that influence, the first concerning Aristotle. Plato sometimes toyed with the Socratic theory of literary inspiration, and sometimes dealt with it more gravely, but surely knew that his own Dialogues would be inspiring to young people. His *Phaedo* doubtless inspired young Aristotle when he came to the Academy at the age of seventeen. In the long run, of course, the inspiration Aristotle had from Plato must largely have come from personal contact between the master and the pupil. But the master was not there, it seems, when the pupil joined the Academic group. For a time, then, Aristotle must have got the influence by reading what we read, the Dialogues. Then came a period, or periods, of a contact more direct; all told, as pupil or assistant, he spent one-third of his life, the middle third, in the Academy. But after Plato's death Aristotle must have refreshed his mind with Plato's writings, and now it was, as commonly is supposed, that the pupil diverged from the Platonic doctrine. In our time it is customary to lay much stress on differences of philosophic doctrine between Aristotle and his teacher, and the differences should not be overlooked; but the direct and positive, pervasive, debt of Aristotle to his master, Plato, and to his spiritual grandsire, Socrates, far outweighs any differences of thought and outlook in all three of them. Our Aristotle is first and foremost among those who have, we may suppose, deliberately gone to the writ-

ings of Plato for learning and inspiration. The debt is clear enough; it would be clearer if we had the dialogues of Aristotle.

The second point I make in the story of Platonic influence is this. No recent Platonist, unless I am mistaken, has noticed the debt which the book called the *Imitation of Christ*, ascribed to Thomas à Kempis, must owe to the concept of imitation which we find, for example, in Plato's *Laws*. The concept may have come to the author of the *Imitatio* in any one or more of various ways; but the corresponding Greek word (*mimesis*) used by Plato is not found in the New Testament, and the Latin rendering, *imitatio*, does not occur in the Vulgate Bible. The abstract concept is originally Greek, not Hebrew. Hebrew is said to be deficient in that sort of abstract terms.

Our third point is this, that since the Reformation, or even on the whole, the Roman Catholic Church is Aristotelian, and Protestants in general have liked Plato more than they like his pupil. It has been said that Aristotle taught men what to think, and Plato taught men how to think. Horace did not say so; and of course most persons of good sense have always known how to combine the food that Plato and his ablest pupil offer into a harmonious diet. So Dante combines them, with the help of Bonaventura and Aquinas. Needless to say, he makes harmony between them by merging them in a tradition that has yet more vitality than that of Aristotle and his teacher. He does not commit the error of Sir Henry Maine,² or of Shelley in his Preface to *Hellas*, which we have lately seen recommitted by more than one Classical scholar, the error of one notable living British humanist who forgot himself; the error of finding all the roots of modern culture in ancient Greece, and forgetting the stem of Palestine, the root of David. Dear friends of the Classics, chew on that. You will understand Plato all the better.

And thus we come to our banquet where the subject we shall chew, the *rem*, is the question of feeding the body and feeding the mind, obviously a Socratic question, but not Greek alone, as witness the twenty-third Psalm. The rule of the Academy and the Benedictine Rule took care of both; no doubt the dual processes of nutrition should have much in common. From a better book than any that Plato wrote we learn the petition, Give us this day our daily bread. That bread is not confined, as Woodrow Wilson thought, to what you laborers put into your mouth on a week-day to sustain the mere physical function. The *Symposium* of Plato helps one to see that the bread is Sunday and sacramental nourishment as well. The bread of that Prayer means everything we need for life; in spite of Molière's Bourgeois Gentleman, who says that we live to eat, and of Monsieur Millikan, who has just said something perilously like it. The bread means the Bible first of all, but I have labored in vain if a few more people in America will not henceforth believe that certain dialogues of Plato are good daily bread; yes, and supersubstantial bread as well. Further, and in keeping with Plato, the petition

means that we need to hear kind tones when we enter this world, and kind tones when we leave it, grace before and after the whole business of taking material meat and drink. Yes, to take another example, it is more important to read the Dialogues of Plato in Greek than to follow his practice of a common academic meal at Oxford, Yale, or Harvard. No reason, of course, why the dual practices should not be combined as at the ancient school in a suburb of Athens. It is pleasant to think that the *Symposium* may have been read aloud by its author to the scholars assembled at the Academic table, or in his absence read aloud there by a well-known youngster hailing from Stagira.

There are, indeed, distinctions to observe, as well as similarities, between feeding the body and nourishing the spirit. Both processes remind us that in all our doings, whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, at training- or at seminary-table, we are to do all, not for our own glory or the glory of Cornell or Yale, or any other, local, university, but for the glory of a name that well-trained alumni still can supply.

Are we hungry? Before we come to our symposium-like myth, there is a difference to be reckoned with between the body and the mind that needs a special stress. It is this. An athlete, Indian, or bear, can, in fact, within a given time fill up his pouch with food and drink. Thereafter the body must be emptied. But when Bacon says, "Reading maketh a full man," or Horace says to fill the mind with substance from the page Socratic, we are not to think that the spirit ever can be filled too full. There are writers who write from an empty mind, and others who write too much or too often from minds that should be more generously and more often replenished. But, rightly treated, the mind goes on indefinitely growing; the process does not falter as the body wanes. Let us tell our young Americans to test that statement by unwearied reading of Plato, and they will find the statement strictly true. What is more, each new idea put into a head makes possible an infinity of new combinations with the treasures that have been laid up in that heavenly place before. Such growth is the hope of youth, the solace of age, and a hint of immortality to come.

But where is your myth? It is here, and both main persons of the fable are with us to-night. It is a tale of Mr. Head and Mr. Belly. While I talk of one, do you please, my audience, Glauccon, Agathon, and Adeimantus, and Diotima as well, and Plato's sister and his niece, who I think are here, do you please think of the other. I shall talk of Mr. Belly, who works for a man with the peculiar name of O. Grinder—it sounds Irish or Italian, but is right American—and who has good things or bad put into him three times a day, and every day, because just so often he is empty. And do you, my Academic audience, keep thinking, please, of Mr. Head—how many good things your boy or pupil, the beloved one, might put into his head and keep if he memorized ten lines of poetry and read ten pages of prose, the best ten lines and pages we could find, not three times a day (though there could be no possible objection to it) but once a day, yet every day, for three hundred and sixty-five days in the year, and for ten years in succession. Sup-

[Continued on page thirty-two]

² As quoted by Walter Woodburn Hyde, in *The Origin of Liberty* (*The Scientific Monthly* 48 [1939].525): "Except the blind forces of nature, there is nothing that moves in the world to-day that is not Greek in origin."

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Vol. XVI

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No. 4

Quicumque haec lecturi sunt

eos omnes

Christi Die Natali et proximi anni Die Primo

et firma uti balutudine et optimo esse animo

ardentissimis cupimus votis

Editorial

We present in this issue a letter from Professor Cedric G. Boulter in which he takes exception to our Editorial for November. We do so all the more readily because, besides setting us right on one or two points, it gives us a welcome opportunity to supplement our comment on the Annapolis Plan.

It should, perhaps, be emphasized that our Editorial was in no way concerned with the merits of the New Program of St. John's College; but neither did it deny that St. John's has distinct merits all its own. The Annapolis Plan has received a great deal of publicity, and its attractive features are a matter of common knowledge. Besides, quite apart from such enthusiastic descriptions as, for example, the essay entitled "Socrates Crosses the Delaware," published in *Harper's Magazine* for June, one should really take for granted that a system set on foot and sponsored by eminent educationists has more than one "good point" in its favor. Even our Editorial indicated that the "great books" movement, as launched at St. John's, is a revolt from the Elective System; and this is in itself a courageous feat. More than that—one is cheered to see Freshman Greek and Sophomore Latin put in their proper place as the advance guards of all culture. Best of all—to set oneself to re-establish "the original college with its original function of intellectual . . . discipline" is to erect an ideal which strongly appeals to the classicist. The Annapolis Plan aims at providing "a balanced liberal education." One's heart warms in reading a statement like

the following in *The Catalogue of St. John's* for 1939-1940: "Institutions should be set up and maintained which shall devote themselves to this end in a single-minded fashion, and they shall protect themselves from the drag of the immediate utilities and schools of vocational training which minister directly to them." Such language commands deep respect in an age dedicated to utilitarian ideals and, so to speak, worshipping "the material point of view" in almost every field of human endeavor.

Our criticism of the Annapolis experiment culminated in two contentions; (1) the Plan jeopardizes its own ideal aim by inviting intellectual eclecticism; (2) it strikes a decided blow at that classical training which we hold to be the goal of the classical secondary school. These, we said, were its "weaknesses."

"A sworn enemy of the classical school" was an infelicitous phrase for us to use in speaking of the Annapolis Plan. And yet, that very expression implied a position from which we find it impossible to recede. To speak concretely: a St. John's graduate can look back upon one year of Greek and one year of Latin in the way of direct contact with the ancient classics. He may, or he may not, have been initiated into the classical atmosphere by a two-year high-school course in either Latin or Greek, or both, for the entrance requirements are satisfied if he has studied any foreign language for two years—French, for instance, or German, or Spanish.¹ Of course, his one Freshman year is wholly devoted to Greek, and his one Sophomore year is wholly given to Latin; and this means intensive work in the rudiments of the language, besides tutorial and seminar work, analysis and criticism. On the other hand, there still are many schools in this country which strive with might and main, against almost crushing odds, to uphold their "classical" curriculum calling for four years of high-school Latin plus two, or three, or even four, years of college Latin; and as to Greek, some colleges still insist on two years of high-school work in that language as an entrance requirement.

Now, it would be stupid to say that a St. John's graduate is not "educated"; he has certainly been in communion (though mostly through English!) with the "great books" of all ages for four years on end. Nevertheless we think that all are bound to admit that he has not received a "classical" education in the narrower sense in which this term is understood by our many long-course institutions. It is just these "classical" schools that have reason to feel alarmed if the Annapolis Plan meets with success at home and wins approval outside. It is these same "classical" schools that the Editorial had in mind when it spoke of the New Program as inimical to our "classical" traditions.

A liberal education distilled from the world's great books is a wonderful attainment; but a liberal education founded preponderately on the languages and literatures of Greece and Rome is another thing. At all events, a one-year pursuit of Latin literature, re-enforced, it is true, by a one-year pursuit of Greek literature, yet at the same time distracted by three different simultaneous objectives ("Languages and Literature"; "Liberal Arts"; "Mathematics and Science")—such a pursuit,

even when intensive, does not seem to allow for that absorption of the classical spirit, that appreciation of the classical form, which are aimed at in the traditional classical school. Is this theory and nothing more? These two fruits, be it noted, have been the goal of the post-Reformation classical school, whether Catholic or Protestant.²

Our Editorial for November was inspired by the picture of the Annapolis Plan drawn by an enthusiastic admirer in *Harpers Magazine* for June, although the official *Catalogue* of St. John's was not ignored. On second thought we doubt whether that picture embodies the views of the leaders of the movement, or whether its large strokes have not perhaps been embellished here or there by the writer's own arabesques.

The statement made in the Editorial, that "a great book is one that has the largest number of possible interpretations," should be supplemented by the words: "not ambiguities but significances—each interpretation possessing a clarity and force that will allow other interpretations to stand by its side without confusion." *Harpers Magazine*, l. c., p. 71.

¹ Not only does the *Catalogue* not require a high-school acquaintance with Latin or Greek,—it does not even seem to urge it as preferable.

² See also W. H. Alexander, "The Classical Discipline in Education, 1899-1939." *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*. Third Series, Section II, Vol. XXXIII, 1939.

"The New Program of St. John's College"

I should be glad if you would consider a brief reply to your criticism of the New Program at St. John's College.

In your editorial in the *Classical Bulletin* for November, you state "that the Annapolis experiment makes no provision, as far as we know, for that specific mental discipline which is the great aim of the classical high school." This statement gives an entirely false impression of the aims and the practice of the St. John's Program. The truth is that in each of the four years of the college course the larger proportion of the student's time in class is devoted to the study of languages and mathematics.

Out of a total of 18½ hours of class-work per week, 5 are spent in the language tutorial and 5 in the mathematics tutorial. And certainly these two subjects have always contributed significantly to the discipline which the classical school imparts. The language studied varies from year to year: in the freshman year it is Greek; in the sophomore year, Latin. I can think of no other non-denominational college in America where Greek and Latin are compulsory subjects.

Naturally the St. John's faculty does not expect the student to attain, in one year, proficiency in Greek or Latin, but it does believe that he will receive an invaluable disciplining of the intellect and the imagination.

Last April I spent a few weeks visiting the classical departments of the larger universities in the east. At that time I went also to Annapolis, for I was curious about the New Program at St. John's and skeptical of its merits. I watched it in operation, and I came away convinced that it constitutes a singularly important effort in behalf of liberal education in America. It is in no sense "a sworn enemy of the classical school," but a valuable ally, and as such it deserves the support and encouragement of classicists everywhere.

University of Cincinnati

CEDRIC G. BOULTER

The *Westminster Version* referred to by Professor Cooper in his paper entitled "Our Plato" is "A New Translation from the Original Greek and Hebrew Texts, with Introductions, Critical and Explanatory Notes, Appendices, and Maps." Longmans, Green and Co.

Learning Latin Words

Points for High School Students

By RAYMOND V. SCHODER, S. J.
West Baden College

In learning a foreign language, either ancient or modern, it is of supreme importance to approach the study from the right viewpoint, and to know clearly what it is that you seek to master. Only then will you know *how* to accomplish the job.

If you were going to build an elaborate piece of furniture, you would first determine clearly just what it was to be; then you would look around for the best, most natural, and easiest way of making it. You would want to be *scientifically efficient*. It is the same in rearing that elaborate and delicate mental structure of a new language. Here, scientific efficiency consists in studying the languages according to the *nature and laws of your mind*. Your mind is your tool in this task; you must use it in the way it is intended to be used. Only thus will you get results. The way it worked for you when you learned English is its natural way; use it now with Latin.

First of all, then, you must have the right attitude towards Latin. You are *not* dealing with a mere set of strange words which can be used as equivalents for the English words you already know. You do *not* wish to take a Latin passage, and translate it into English, and then *read the English*. You do *not* want a mere stiff, unintelligent, *memorized* grasp of a certain number of Latin words, word-combinations ("idioms"), or the various grammatical forms in a word-chart.

What you *do* want is to learn Latin as a *complete language*, a language not at all dependent on the English language, but one that is complete in itself, and must be used and understood *in itself*, just as it was by the Latins who used it, and who knew no other language—least of all English, a language not yet born in Cicero's day. A Roman boy was no more intelligent than you. But *he* learned Latin as a complete language. So also, then, can you. Latin is really an easier language to learn than English. If you had put as much time on Latin as you have on English, you would see that this is true. If you learned English as a child, you should be able to learn Latin, now that you are in high school! But you must go about it in the right way.

Therefore, in learning Latin words:

(1) Try to learn them *as a Roman would*. You must see what they mean in themselves; you must not merely learn *what* they mean (as is told you in an English-Latin dictionary), but *why* they mean just that. That is much more important. To do this, the best way is to learn all words by their *roots*. The root of a word is that part of it which remains the same throughout all the changes of the *ending* in the different cases, tenses, moods, etc. The root of a word tells you what it stands for, e. g., FER- (in FERRO) meant to a Roman "bring" or "carry." That is its basic meaning; everywhere a Roman saw this root FER- in a word, he immediately knew it had something to do with the root-meaning of "bring" or "carry." What the special modification of this basic meaning was in the special context he was

dealing with he learned from the rest of the word, from its *ending*. Thus, when he saw or heard FERIMUS, he got two mental pictures: FER-, meaning something about "bringing" or "carrying," and -IMUS, showing the special application in the present instance, namely, "we are now doing it"—all contained in the ending -IMUS. This ending -IMUS was characteristic of this word-class (conjugation) and always had that sense, no matter what root it was "tacked on to." Once, then, you know the root-meaning of a word, you will easily see why it could mean to a Roman all those shades of signification that the dictionary will tell you you must express by the different English words it gives under that Latin word. Thus, hardly any Latin word can be perfectly paralleled by *one* English word that will fit the sense in every place the Latin word is used. You have to learn the Latin word in its *own* root-meaning; then you will see what English word best stands for the sense of the Latin word in each individual context. This explains why many English words are necessary to express the various forces of a single Latin word in various places—for there are many meanings which *branch out* from the basic *root-meaning* of the Latin word, and you have to pick the right English word to express the meaning it has in the present context.

(2) Now, in learning a word by its roots, proceed just as you do in learning a new *English* word. When you come across an English word you do not know (e. g., "laminated"), what do you do? You look it up in a dictionary, and find that it means "To build up in layers, to put one layer on top of another; from the Latin *lamina*, 'layer' or 'plate.'" Then you try to connect this meaning, along with its mental picture if possible, so closely with this English word that when you run across "laminated" again, it will mean to you something built up in layers, like a laminated radio coil.

(a) As a help to connect word and meaning in this inseparable way, take a Latin word, e. g., our old friend FERRO, and stressing the FER- part (the root) most, picture to yourself someone carrying or bringing something; make the motion yourself in miniature; use all the sense-connections you can, e. g., raising your hand as though holding something, or feeling its weight. In this way you will connect in your mind this root FER- and all its various endings with the notion it stands for, and when you hear or read it you will immediately get the picture of the action it stands for. This requires considerable practice, of course; do it three or four times on each word; then repeat them once or twice next day, and then after a week, brush up on those that do not "stick" so well.

(b) The same principles apply to the mastering of the various *endings* of the verb (conjugations) and the noun and adjective (declensions). Do not merely *memorize* them, but in practicing them try to let their *meaning* stand out for you, and get so closely connected in your mind and imagination with their individual modifying force on the root of the word that as soon as you run across such an ending on any verb, noun, etc., you will at once grasp the special modification of meaning given it by its ending. E. g., don't just rattle off AMO, AMAS, etc., but go through these forms in order, *letting them*

stand for their whole force as they would to a Roman; i. e., AM-O means "I love," AM-AS means "you love," etc. Here there is a common meaning ("love," expressed in AM-, the root) and also a *special modification of that meaning* (expressed in the ending). These same endings put on another verb of the same class as AMO have the same modifying effect, e. g., PAR-O, PAR-AS, etc. So too, there is nothing hard about Latin *tenses*. If you wish to say in English that you will do a thing in the future, you put the correct form of the word "to be" *before* the verb you are using, e. g., "I *shall* love." A Roman turned the process around, and added a special *ending* to the root of the verb, e. g., AMA-BO. His method is just as sensible as yours, and no harder to learn, once you see how it works. You have merely to get, by much intelligent practice, and by using as much sense-connection as possible (seeing, hearing a thing going on as you repeat its word to yourself) an easy facility in recognizing these endings for their individual meaning, and *thereafter* whenever you meet them they will readily tell their part of the story.

(c) That is all there is to it. Once you know both the *endings* and the *root-meaning* of the word at present before you, you will have the *whole thought* the Roman wanted to convey.

(3) One thing more. In all this practice on ending- and root-meanings, you must try to get the meaning from them *directly*, that is, not through the English word that translates them. Thus, let the word DOMUS signify to you directly the *idea* "house," as a structure people live in, not the English word "house." There is *one idea* (along with its imaginary picture) of such a building both for the Roman and for you. He got the idea every time he saw or heard the word DOMUS, just as *you* do when you hear or read HOUSE. You have merely to realize that DOMUS stands for the same idea as does HOUSE, and henceforth it will give you that idea just as well as does HOUSE; you have then learned another word meaning the same as the word you already knew. This same *idea*, therefore, should now come to your mind at the hearing of either word (DOMUS or HOUSE). There is no need for DOMUS to make you think of the *English word* HOUSE, but only of the *idea* itself. The process should not be: DOMUS = HOUSE = idea of a habitable building, but directly: DOMUS = idea of a habitable building.

In short. There are many *ideas* common to the ancient Roman and the modern American, e. g., HOUSE, DOG, TO MAKE, TO SUFFER, etc. Both the Roman and you express these ideas by words; he just happens to have a different word from yours; you already know *your* word; you have merely to learn what *his* is. You will thus learn his *code* for idea-expression. Practice along these lines makes reading Latin *easy, enjoyable*, not drudgery, but the thrill of achievement. You will actually be able (if you keep at it in this way long enough) to read an old Latin author just as a Roman boy read him when his book was brand-new. That will be fun. For he is *worth* reading.

P. S. Do not hope to remember all this from one reading. Go over these points again, and ever so often later on. You will soon see that this is the natural way of learning Latin, the way your mind is *made to work*.

Teaching Greek as Greek

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From time to time we revert to the many reasons why Latin should be continued in our schools and colleges, but have we abandoned as hopeless our plea for the study of Greek? Surely, we teachers have not changed our attitude in regard to the value of the language nor have we become so selfish that we reserve for ourselves exclusively the pleasure of reading in the original a drama of Sophocles or a poem of Sappho. It cannot be that we are lacking in number and type of students capable of pursuing Greek especially in our privately endowed colleges to which the upper ten per cent of the best students graduating from high school are attracted. Is it possible that fear has become such a controlling force in this generation that students are alarmed at the sound of a foreign language?

It is not my purpose to tell you why we should teach Greek. The subject is exhausted. I am advocating that we ought to keep in step with the times and put the study of Greek on a new footing. In the past we wrote volumes on the value of the classics, we talked hard and long but we were writing and talking for an audience like ourselves who were already confirmed classicists. The man who aimed at wealth did not listen because he was unwilling to believe any study of advantage that did not materialize immediately into dollars and cents. From under our very eyes students were being graduated and the business world was being managed without our help. We naturally deplored the situation but we sat back to teach the favored few. We continued to hope, however, that some day businessmen would realize their deficiency and come back to us.

We have waited sufficiently long. It is for us now to take cognizance of the methods by which modern business is managed and place Greek on a business basis that will attract the businessman. Our subject may be too sacred for us to advertise in flashy and emboldened colors, a measure to which we need not have recourse while our love and enthusiasm has not waned, but we ought to let the students within our reach know what we have to sell. Every concern that is interested in recruiting its force has an advance agent that personally enlists new members. In this case the personal agent must be the Greek teacher who through personal contact can convince the students of the benefits of the Greek language for his study of science, literature, or whatever may be his chosen field. A friendly talk to the student on the value of Greek to him personally in his particular field will have greater weight than pressure from any other source. The instructor will sell Greek in terms of dollars and cents but will most judiciously avoid all arguments in regard to culture or pleasure. The student will eventually discover that for himself and consider it his revelation.

In respect to the presentation of the subject the Greek teacher must, in keeping with good business practices, adopt the newest and best methods of procedure just as every business concern does. We might well profit from the enthusiasm and interest aroused by other language teachers. Within the past decade the study of Latin

and modern languages attracted considerable attention by investigations and by suggestions for newer methods of approach. As a result, today students are reading French as French; Latin as Latin. Then, why not read Greek as Greek and, to prove that the language is readable, begin the reading after a few lessons on the case endings and the third person singular and plural of the verb. The constant repetition of the words in a work like the *Anabasis* of Xenophon soon familiarizes students with vocabulary. I find that, if at the beginning thirty lines are carefully prepared before class, sixty can be read at sight in the class period. In this way confidence is gained and a considerable amount of pleasure is afforded to both teacher and pupil. As soon as a student acquires facility in reading he naturally desires to read other authors, and he soon discovers that Greek is as valuable for his particular field of work as any other subject in the curriculum.

What we Greek teachers need in order to make this interest contagious among our students is an enthusiasm born of a strong conviction of the worth of what we have to offer and a determination to place the subject of Greek on the high pedestal it once occupied. Let us not admit that the language which voiced our civilization is dead. We who have at our command the most beautiful things to teach and are prepared to teach the things of permanent value must not sit back discouraged and neglected for lack of pupils when we can get them on the same principles that any modern business is conducted.

As the businessman advertises his product, we should advertise Latin.—Gerard B. Cleary

"A New Latin Reader"

A New Latin Reader, edited by H. W. F. Franklin, B. A., and J. A. G. Bruce, M. A., assistant masters at Rugby School, offers seventy-eight pieces of prose and poetry, representing Tibullus, Ovid, Vergil, Cicero, Aulus Gellius, Nepos, Justinus, Pliny, Livy, Sallust, Suetonius, Q. Curtius, Caesar, Tacitus, Martial, Seneca, Horace, Catullus, Claudian, Vegetius. They are grouped under the titles of Legends, Stories, Famous Men, Battle, Life in Rome, Country and Sea, and Oratory, together with a collection of twenty-six Epitaphs and Epigrams, one of which is modern.

It is difficult to appraise works of this kind, and the last word rests not with the reviewer but with the individual teacher. The *New Reader*, designed for Middle School Forms, would be of use in Fourth-Year High. We are favorably impressed with the choice of pieces and the crisp Notes. The Vocabulary is, of course, a blessing to the young Latinist. The booklet is neatly printed and easy to handle. The price (\$1.10) is reasonable. The appearance of a new Reader is generally a healthy sign. It shows that somewhere some earnest teacher of Latin "desires some relief from the rigorous, if salutary, discipline" of the daily routine. Happily, in this case, relief is sought in diversifying the regular reading matter and taking the pupil even deeper into Latin. This is good psychology. *A New Latin Reader* is published by Longmans, Green and Co.

Our Plato [Continued from page twenty-seven]

pose we began the process at the age of ten and kept it up to twenty, or began at the age of seventeen and kept it up to twenty-seven. Ten lines or pages of dessert or dinner is a moderate amount, not likely to give Mr. Head an indigestion. Ten times 365 is 3650, and ten times that is 36,500 lines or pages stored up in the wise householder's treasury. The normal schools, they say, call the thing "mere memory"; the Greeks called Memory the mother of the Muses.

The parable or fable you hunger and hanker for is this. Mr. Pat. O. Grinder went to the office of Dr. Wise complaining of his stomach and some other organs; he developed a theme with variations. And when the organ-recital was over, Dr. Wise, who was Mr. Patient's friend, said merely: "Come home with me to dinner." The scene is changed; the sable butler announces that "Dinner is served." The doctor took his guest into the bright dining-room, and there weren't any chairs at the table; only two chairs half-way between the table and the wall. And on the spacious table there was nothing but a most extraordinary bowl, a huge, capacious bowl, at the place where the guest of honor would usually be sitting. The doctor and his guest sat down away from the table. The butler came in, and poured one cocktail into the bowl, and then another. Would you like a third? He then went out, came back, and poured in soup. Not a word was said. He went away again. He came and went, and poured in radishes and olives, two or three of each, and a stalk or two of celery. Coming and going he poured in fish; entree; two goblets of water at different times; roast beef, two helpings of it; pepper, salt, a sauce, and bread and butter; also gravy and potatoes, twice, to go with the beef; three kinds of wine, red, white, and amber, on several occasions; a tomato-salad and the salad-dressing; plum-pudding and a vigorous sauce for it; nuts, raisins, peppermints, two bonbons made of chocolate and nuts; two cups of coffee, seven half-burnt cigarettes, and two cigars. The butler did a thorough job of it for Mr. Belly, I mean the bowl. Imagine the cigars and cigarettes afloat on the lagoon. And when the feast was over, Dr. Wise got up and said to his patient: Mr. Organ-Grinder, come and look into the bowl, and see what you have done to Mr. Belly, your other self, three hundred and sixty-five days now in succession since Friday, the 28th of April, nineteen thirty-eight. Study the Benedictine Rule; consider why Plato and other Greek philosophers attained the age of four score years. Put Mr. Belly on an Academic or a Benedictine diet; feed Mr. Head a little better, especially on the Bible and our Plato. Give him ten pages of the Dialogues a day in English, and by April 28 in nineteen forty he will have read them twice with almost a month to spare.

But a word about Plato in Greek. Many persons in my humble situation, and some higher up, aver that you can get what the ancients have to give us without the study of Latin or Greek. My whole experience runs counter to that shallow notion. It is obvious, of course, that translations can effect much good. The most influential book that ever was produced was a Latin translation of the Bible. The next most influential, we may

well believe, is another translation, the "Authorized Version" of the Bible in English, which the Westminster Version, now appearing, may yet replace. But cultivated men and women and leaders of the State must read great books as the authors of them meant them to be read. Our Plato should be the Plato of statesmen and scholars as well as of philosophers in the stricter sense. But as the most painful thing in American culture so-called is the inability of clergymen to read the New Testament in Greek, so the next most painful, very likely, is the sight of teachers of philosophy pretending to train academic students, and prospective teachers even, in philosophy without recourse to Plato in his own beautiful and telling style. And those of us who translate Plato do well to think of their efforts as preparing for the day when the study of Greek shall regain its rightful place in our academic world; when schools become conscious that their own name is Greek. Let us not faint. Time is long, and tides return; and an unexpected spring-tide can come quickly. Greek is itself so potent that one good teacher in a school or city can revive it. What could not ten principals or presidents effect?

And now let us ask ourselves what will be here two hundred, and two thousand, years from now. The present demagogues and tyrants will be gone and mostly forgotten. A new generation of ephemeral rhetoricians of the worser kind will be singeing their wings with their own inflammatory shrilling. But the Bible, with its Greek New Testament, will be here. Orthodox Judaism doubtless will be here, although the conversion it now is undergoing may by then, or long before, be finished. The Christian Church will be here, though the protest of the Protestants may have wholly ceased. The core of the Catholic Church will be here unchanged, a Church not yet regarding the destruction of family love as an accepted fact. And the pagan whom Christians generally have found nearest them in spirit, he who in the *Laws* does not regard the destruction of family life as a fact to be accepted, he whose utterance often needs no real change to be accepted in our Christian hymns, he, our imperishable Plato, will yet be here, while a remnant of the faithful will be studying him in Greek.

The "Swan-Song" of Socrates

(Plato *Phaedo* 84e-85b)

Am I a poorer prophet than the swans,
The swans—who sing most sweetly when they see
That death is near—rejoicing that they go
Unto the deity they serve? Yet men,
Through their own fear of death belie the swans,
And say that they, lamenting doleful death,
Sing their last song through grief. Men reckon not
That no bird sings when hungry, cold or pained,—
Nor swift, nor swallow, nor the nightingale—
Birds which are said to sing in pain and grief.

Yet neither do these seem to me to mourn
In song, nor yet the swans. But, since they are
Apollo's priests and see their future bliss,
They sing with joy that day more gladly than
Before. A fellow-servant to the swans
Am I, and sacred to Apollo's name;
My prophecies must fare as well as theirs,
Nor do I die less willingly than they.

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